

AN
ESSAY

ON

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Universal Redemption.

PART I.

BY

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To Mr. N. Gale.

S I R,

THIS short Discourse is presented to you, as a publick Acknowledgment of the manifold Favours which you have been pleased to confer upon its Author.

I know that you (who are already furnished with many excellent Books) will not look upon this to be the utmost that can be offered upon so Large and Noble a Subject, but rather as a few sudden and occasional Thoughts which my leisure hours permitted me to form into this order.

If the over-curious should demand wherefore I send this so small a Creature (or indeed any at all) into the World, the Answer is ready, that 'tis to do good, and to pleasure my Friends; and let any one tell me (if he can) who of my Enemies I have injured hereby.

I think I understand what is here affirmed and rejected, with the Reasons thereof, and

The Dedication.

am sure I write with a sober and honest Mind, and do not doubt but that throughout the whole may be found such tolerable good Sense, and such clear and useful Truths, as may in some measure either instruct or please (at least many of) the thinking and unprejudic'd: And they I perswade my self will presently fancy, that had it had another turn, it might have appear'd with somewhat of a greater Strength and Lustre.

However, both the Subject and the Management of it (such as it now is) are freely submitted to the Censure of the Wise and Impartial; but as for the Opinion of the Ignorant and Bigotted, I am not much solicitous or over careful; since, dear Sir, your ready Acceptance and favourable Construction hereof, will be a very great Pleasure to

Your obliged Friend, and

Humble Servant,

J. S.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

TH E most comfortable and suitable Apprehension we can form of God is, That he is a Being of Infinite Love and Beneficence; that he is good, and does good, and that *his tender Mercies are over all his Works.* Psal. 119.
68.

This is the dearest and most Godlike Attribute, and the Divine Glory seems most particularly concern'd in the Honour and Vindication of it, against those fatal Predestinarians, who look upon the Father of Mercies as one that hath made Myriads of his Creatures purposely to make them for ever miserable; and as one that delights in triumphing over the Wretched and Calamitous, whom yet nothing but his own peremptory Decree hath made so, and who were absolutely doom'd unto Misery, even long before they either sinned or had a Being: For so indeed (and 'tis sad that so it is) too many represent the God of all Love and Righteousness under the Character of the most detestable In-

justice and Cruelty, and make him who is the true Lover of Men an Almighty Cannibal, and an Idol more black than the God of the barbarous *Americans*.

Which injurious Thoughts of the Blessed and most Amiable Being are very subtilly insinuated under the fair pretence of advancing his Sovereign Will, his Power and Prerogative over all his Creatures.

And as if these Perfections could not otherwise be acknowledg'd and defended, they have strained them beyond all the bounds of Just and Good, and robb'd the Divine Being of the brightest Pearl of Majesty, even the lovely Harmony of his never-jarring Attributes.

For indeed a Will that is Arbitrary and not govern'd by Wisdom and Goodness, is a mere effeminate Weakness and unaccountable Humour, and infinitely unbecoming of him, who does all things according to Counsel, to Righteousness and Truth.

So that the mighty noise of the Glory of God's absolute Dominion in contriving and resolving the Ruin of his Creatures, even for mere Will and Pleasure-sake, and without any regard to their own Defaults, is no Exaltation of any Perfection in God, but a sad and visible Reflection
upon

upon his Goodness, and consequently an Enemy to true Religion, the Foundation of that being laid in the Mercy and Love of God towards us.

And thus they very greatly disparage the Grace of God, who under the Covert of its Freeness detract from its Fulness and Extention, and with narrow and diminishing Conceptions represent it as a desultory and contracted thing, scattered only here and there by humorous measures, and directed by no other Rule but what is arbitrary and partial.

For this celebrated Freeness is but a fond doting on some few, who fancy themselves the special Darlings of Heaven, but not upon any reason they have to think so, either from the soundness of their Faith, or the goodness of their Lives, but from pure Imagination, and an overweaning Opinion of themselves. And then they admire (as well they may) the Freeness of that discriminating Grace which hath chosen them to be the peculiar People, with as little reason as they conceit themselves to be so.

In a word (and let me say it again) this Freeness which they commend in God, is what we justly call childish and unreasonable Fondness in our selves, and which we may therefore most assu-

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redly conclude is infinitely dissonant from him, who is an universal Lover of Righteousness and Goodness, and no inconditionate Respector of Persons.

Act. 10. 34.

Let every good Christian therefore comfort himself with these Thoughts, that the God whom we serve never denies his Grace to any fit and capable Subject, that he never withdraws it from any Man until it be abused, nor limits the great design of his Clemency and Kindness, by granting any Monopoly of it only to a few particular Favourites: But has settled it as a publick Charter upon the whole Corporation of Mankind, and by the Passion and Merits of our Lord hath redeemed the intire Progeny of lapsed *Adam*, and once more hath placed them all in a salvable State, and possibility of Life Eternal.

For this was the great end and purpose of Christ's Incarnation and Advent amongst us, *That he by the Grace of God should taste Death for every Man: i. e.* through the Divine Compassion and Kindness to us Mortals, the Son of God is appointed to suffer all the dreadful Pangs and Miseries of an accursed Death, for the great, the universal and everlasting Benefit of Mankind.

Heb. 2. 9.

And

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And in this was manifested the Love of ^{1 Joh. 4. 9.} God towards us, in that he sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we should live through him.

This therefore being not only a Truth, but withal a very important and blessed one; an Article in which every Man is most highly concern'd, and which is certainly most worthy of all grateful Acceptance: ^{1 Tim. 1. 15.}

I shall therefore the more readily, and with a greater freedom, offer my thoughts upon it, and they in short are:

' That Christ did not die purely for the ^{The Notice} sake of some few, for a small part of ^{of Redem-} Mankind, only for the Elect, or those ^{tion.} that shall be actually and eventually saved; but for all and every Man whatsoever, without any manner of Exception or Restraint.

' And that the Righteousness, the Death, and Sufferings of our Lord and Saviour ^{2 Cor. 5. 21.} have put every Man into a capacity of the Divine Favour, in a possibility of ^{Joh. 3. 16.} Pardon, and the obtaining an everlasting Salvation.

' That neither Adam's Sin, nor any past (and forsaken) Miscarriages of our own shall render God implacable and irreconcilable to us; but that through his Son our Lord he will afford all necessary Grace and

and Assistance to enable and excite us to Faith, Repentance and good Living.

And that upon the godly and faithful improvement of this abundant Mercy and Help, he will most assuredly forgive all Men their Sins, justify and ever bless and save them.

And this I take to be a true and a plain (tho short) Account of our most happy Redemption; and do presume that these few words comprehend the whole of what we have any just and necessary occasion to insist upon (at least in this Essay) concerning the *Extent and Purpose of the Death of Christ*.

And in this Article of Christian Faith I am so far from being singular (which by the way is some Comfort) that 'twere easy to produce several Councils, publick Confessions of Faith, and a numerous Catalogue (of the most eminent) both of Antient and Modern Divines, all of them giving a very ample Testimony hereunto.

However, waving such Topicks of external Authority (for the present, and until there be a greater occasion) let us see how far these few following Arguments will contribute towards the Proof of the *Question* before us.

The

The Extent and Purpose of Christ's *Argum. 1.* Death, and of our Redemption by him, are exhibited and declared to us in the most plain and general Terms, I think I may say in the highest Signs and Notes of Universality: In such that are clear and open to the common Sense and Understanding of Mankind, and that are free from all Ambiguity and doubtful Meanings: As,

1. By a universal Indefinite: — *The Joh. 4.42. Saviour of the World.*
2. By a universal Collective: *Who¹ Tim. 2.6. gave himself a Ransom for all. — And Chap. 4.10. who is the Saviour of all Men.*
3. By a universal Distributive: — *That Heb. 2. 9. he by the Grace of God should taste Death for every Man.*
4. By a universal Affirmative opposed to a particular Negative: *He is a¹ Joh. 2.2. Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World, and not for ours only.*
5. By a universal Negative and a universal Affirmative placed in opposition to each other: — *Not willing² Pet. 3.9. that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance, to the acknowledgment of the Truth, and be saved.*

Now

Now these I presume will be owned by every Man, to be very plain and general Expressions, and that they are not to be restrained or abridg'd of their natural, *i. e.* of their usual Extent and Significancy, without a very good and obvious reason for such a Restriction: And that it is not enough to pretend that in some places of holy Scripture, and upon several other occasions, divers of the like (or even of the same) Expressions are to be understood in a very narrow and limited sense.

These Universals, *the World, the whole World, all Men, and every Man, &c.* when they are simply put, *i. e.* inserted and made use of without any Restriction either of express words, or that necessarily ariseth from the nature of the Speech, or the Subject spoken of; they never do or can signify the far lesser and smaller part of Mankind, much less the Elect only, or the little World, which (as some fancy) is absolutely predestinated unto everlasting Life.

This is a false Notion of the word [*World*] which is no where used in this sense (at least not in all the New Testament) but either for the whole species of Mankind, as, *God so loved the World, &c.* or for the wicked and worser part of Men,

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Men, *If the World hate you, &c.* Joh. 15. 18.

Nay, on the contrary, the Christians are not only never called the World, but frequently and in exprefs terms they are contradistinguish'd thereunto, — *Ye are not of the World, but I have chosen you out of the World.* Joh. 15. 19.

And again, — *We know that we are of God; — And the whole World lieth in Wickedness;* i. e. not the less, but by much the greater part of it. 1 Joh. 5. 19.

And now certainly, when the plain and literal sense of Scripture doth *not clasp* with any Article of Faith, with some exprefs and plain Passages of the *same* holy Writings, or the Scope and Series of the Context, or with some clear and sound Principles of Reason, we ought not to recede from, but to prefer it unto any other Sense or Interpretation whatsoever.

And I appeal to all thinking and generous People, whether the Doctrine of Christ's procuring a Salvability for *All* without exception, be not of a more favourable Nature and Consideration, both in regard of God and Men, and more consonant to the nature of Religion, and the Government of the World, than his leaving the greatest part of Mankind under an absolute impossibility of ever being either good or happy.

And

And accordingly we may observe that the Doctrine of Universal Redemption is generally recommended to us as a ground and reason of some very important Duty, wherein all Mankind are concern'd, or as a Motive and Inducement to the universal Practice thereof.

As for instance. Our Saviour's words
 Joh. 3. 16. about God's Love to the World, were intended to invite all People to come unto, and to believe on him : It is mentioned as the great Reason of that universal Obedience which we owe unto Christ, considering the high Dignity of his Person,
 2 Cor. 5. 14. and his becoming lower than the Angels, through his abundant Kindness unto, and for the unspeakable benefit of us Mortals,
 Chap. 8. 9. *That we thro his Poverty might be rich*, and by his Sufferings be eternally happy ; he therefore by the Grace of God came and tasted Death for every Man.

Again, 'tis proposed as the great Motive to our Patience and Perseverance, our hope and our trust in God amidst all the Trials and Troubles of this World.

Farther, it is used as a very powerful Argument to encourage us all to amend our Lives wherein we have done amiss, and then to depend upon Christ's Merits and Intercession for the Pardon of our Sins, for Justification, and Life Eternal.

And

And to mention no more, 'tis also used as an Argument, *that Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and giving of Thanks should be made for all Men, for Kings, and for all that are in Authority.* 1 Tim. 2.1.

Certainly therefore, were these things but once seriously and distinctly consider'd, they are enough to make all teachable and ingenuous Men afraid of contradicting a Principle, not only so clear in it self, but also of such vast importance and concernment in its Use.

For after these manifest Declarations over and over touching the universal Extent of the Death of Christ, to make a Monopoly or Inclosure of it to a few, leaving all the residue of Mankind under an inevitable necessity of perishing for ever: What is this but to give the holy Scripture (I had almost said) the Lie, and to shake the Minds of People in the Practice of their Duties, yea to deter them from all Observance of Religion, by raising and digging up the very Foundation that was designedly laid for the building up of all Men in Faith and Holiness, and by taking away that which was graciously vouchsafed to support the whole Fabrick of Virtue and Piety in the World?

To conclude this Argument. They who teach that Christ died only for the Elect,

Elect, and intended to be a Saviour but of a few, and the lesser part of the World; and not of all and every Man, not of the World, and the whole World, &c. they do speak as much in contradiction to the Word of God, as the affirmation and denial of the very same Term, wherein the Essence of a Contradiction is defined to consist.

And they cannot but own that the Scriptures do no where expressly assert the Redemption of the Elect only, and that they do never either by any universal or particular Negatives at all declare against Christ's dying for all Men. The which one would think might be a little considered by those Gentlemen, who (to say no worse) so unsuccessfully wrack their Wits, to limit and obscure all the express and general Phrases which countenance so reasonable and so blessed a Doctrine as this of Universal Redemption.

Arg. 2.

The great and manifold Blessings of the Cross of Christ are as universally diffused, and reach (at least in offer and design) to as many as do the penal Evils of Original Sin; and the happy Redemption and Deliverance wrought out by the blessed Jesus, is for every Man that is become mortal and miserable through the unhappy Fall of the Protoplast.

For

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. It's true, these words refer chiefly to the Death and Resurrection of the Body, &c. But then can we imagin that a merciful Redeemer would (even by his Death and Sufferings) procure our living again in the World to come, and not procure for us a possibility of being happy therein?

Nay, but on the contrary, we are plainly told that the same *Many*, and the same *All* who were under Condemnation and Death for the first Transgression, have now the free Gift and Offer of Justification and Life, through the Righteousness of Christ. God commended (saith the Apostle) his Love towards us, in that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us: Therefore being justified (or redeemed) by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath to come.

And as by Adam's Offence Death and Condemnation came upon all Men; even so thro the Righteousness of Christ the free Gift of Justification and Life is tendred unto all Men: i. e. all Men are again put into a salvable State and Capacity of Pardon, and of immortal Blessedness.

Here the Commensurableness and Co-extension of the Grace of God in Christ for the Justification of Men, with the

Condemnation brought upon them by *Adam's* Sin, is most plainly asserted; and the Condemned ones of *Adam*, and the Justified ones of Christ are frequently computed by the very same numerical Terms and Expressions.

For as in some Verses we read of no more than *many* made Sinners, and becoming dead thro the Offence and Transgression of *Adam*; so in the very same places we read of no fewer than *many* to whom the Grace of God hath abounded, and who shall be made righteous by Christ.

VER. 15.

VER. 19.

And again; as we hear of no more than *All* under Condemnation, so of no fewer than *All* that are recovered to the possibility of Justification and Life.

Seeing therefore that those who die thro the first *Adam*, and those who are redeemed again by the second, are express'd by the same universality of Phrase, and that frequently repeated in several successive Verses, we cannot but judg it most absurd, and altogether arbitrary, to restrain and limit the latter Number to a very few in the comparison, even whilst we (justly) allow to the other the utmost Universality and Extension.

And it is surely a very weak and childish thing to object, that such universal Expressions

pressions are sometimes (and upon other occasions) to be taken in a very restrictive and narrow sense, unless there were the same manifest reason and necessity for the doing so here.

But to prevent and obviate any such pretence, it is sufficient to appeal to the thinking part of the World, whether it would not seem a very strange, and unaccountable Procedure to pardon the principal (if not sole) and wilful Criminals, and to redeem and deliver them from the Punishment of their Sins; and yet to reprobate and condemn Millions of their Offspring for that Transgression, who could no more prevent the Commission of it, or contribute towards it, than they could hinder their being born of Parents that had sin'd; and who were no more Causes of *Adam's* Fall than of their own Beings, or the World's Creation.

Could the Father of Mercies be so transcendently severe, as eternally to condemn the greatest part of his Children, even without the least regard unto, or consideration had of their Sins, *i. e.* of any that were properly theirs; and not rather give his Son to die for all as well as some, the one being as feasible and easy as the other? And Goodness loves to extend and diffuse it self, and is magnified

by its Latitude as well as its Intention.

And all the Posterity of *Adam* were in an equal State and Condition with regard to the first Offence, *i.e.* none of them could either possibly prevent, or assent to its Commission; at least some were not more guilty of it than others. And Justice no more required that the greatest part of the World should suffer for it, than that all should do so.

And as for Grace and Mercy, they are surely much more illustrated in the Redemption of all, than of only a few.

And one would think that not only Wisdom and Goodness, but Justice too, do require that *Adam* should as well be the Representative of the whole World in his Restoration, as in his Fall: For it seems most reasonable to suppose, if all Men must be concluded in his Sin, that then they should be likewise included in the Pardon that was granted to him for it.

As touching the first, several good Reasons may be offer'd, *i.e.* wherefore many of the Miseries of this Life, and Death it self at last, should descend on all Men, after, for, and upon the consideration of the Transgression and Fall of *Adam*: But as for the redeeming of a few rather than all, I could never yet see any thing like thereunto. The

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The sum of the Argument is, That Christ died for all that were dead in *Adam*, and to this end and purpose too, *viz.* That all whom he died for, *should not* ^{2 Cor. 5.} *live unto themselves, but unto him that died* ^{14, 15.} *for them: i. e. they who are graciously redeemed from their miserable Estate and Condition, and placed in a new Capacity of being happy, are thereby design'd and most highly oblig'd to live not according to their own Lusts and Corruptions, but in all sincere and constant Obedience to the Will and Commandments of him who died and rose again, that he might bless us all, in turning every one of us away from our Iniquities.*

Now the Apostle designing to shew this, *i. e.* how greatly all Men are (to the utmost that in them lies) concern'd to be thankful and obedient to Christ, upon the consideration of that lost and miserable Estate from which he hath delivered them, does therefore lay down this general Proposition, *viz. That all were dead.*

And the Medium or Argument to prove this Universal Ruin, is taken from the Universality of Redemption, or Christ's dying for all: *One died for all, therefore all were dead.*

But now if Christ did not die for all

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that

that were dead in *Adam*, then the extent of his Death could not prove that all were dead: And the reason is plain, even because a Universal cannot be infer'd from a Particular; *i. e.* To argue that Christ died for some only, therefore all were dead, is plainly inconsequent.

St. *Paul's* reasoning must therefore be weak and false, or the Doctrine of Universal Redemption be certainly true.

One died for all, therefore all were dead.

Now if the word *All* in both these Propositions be not univocal, and of the same Extent and Comprehension, the Apostle's meaning must needs be one of these two: Either,

1. One died for some only, therefore some only were dead. Or,

2. One died for some only, *therefore all were dead.*

But take which you please, it amounts to much the same; for the former Conclusion is false in Divinity, and the latter is as plainly so, according to the true nature and just form of Argumentation; and is such a manifest Fallacy, as one might almost hope that no Person would ever shew himself either so rash, or so ignorant, as once to charge it upon the Great and Learned Apostle.

And this (I think) shews that Christ
tasted

tasted Death for as many as were lost, for as many as needed a Propitiation to restore them to Life and Happiness; or otherwise the Argument would have been most shamefully weak and inconclusive.

If Christ had made an Atonement for the Elect only, if one died for a few, this indeed would have prov'd that those were in a lost and undone condition; but surely it could never possibly have followed from thence that therefore *All were dead.*

The Extent and Amplitude of the Order and Direction given to the Apostles and their Successors for the universal Ministry and Promulgation of the Gospel, is certainly a very full and convincing Proof of the Question before us. Arg. 3.

They were commanded to *teach all Nations*, and to make Profelytes to the Christian Religion; to *preach the Gospel to every Creature*; to shew that God's Intentions were that no People should be passed by; but that *Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in Christ's Name among all Nations.* Mat. 28. 19.
Mark 16. 15.
Luke 24. 47.

They were now to testify that Christ gave himself a Ransom for all: And that God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself. 1 Tim. 2. 6.
2 Cor. 5. 19.

And they were to shew that God hath commanded (not all Men in some places, nor some Men in all places, but) *all Men every where to repent.* A^{ct}. 17. 30.

And accordingly the Apostles went forth and preached, every where saith *St. Mark*, meaning to all People and Nations within their reach; for they were Ch. 16. 20. to be Witnesses to Christ in *Jerusalem*, in all *Judea*, and in *Samaria*, and to the uttermost Parts of the Earth. A^{cts} 1. 8.

And were it necessary to our present purpose, it might (I presume in some good measure) be shewed when the Apostles solemnly parted from each other to execute their Master's Will, and how they took their particular Provinces, and went every one into the Country that was assigned him; and how those many Apostolick Persons who were afterwards engaged in the same weighty Imployment, travel'd into distant Places and Territories, that the sound of the Gospel might go forth into all Lands, and that there might be no People, Nation or Language, but the good News of it should be heard amongst them.

And this indeed was one great End of the Gift of Tongues that was granted on the day of *Pentecost*, and that continued for several years after, that no means of

instructing all People might be any where wanting.

Now whence could all this come, but from the Compassion and Goodness of God to a degenerate and miserable World, even to all Persons in all Places and Ages of the World (at least) from thence-forwards?

And what could be the great and good Design of the Father of Mercies in all this, but that every one should come to the knowledg of the Truth, be converted and live?

It was the end of St. John the Baptist his preaching, *To give the knowledg of Salvation to his People, for the Remission of Sins, through the tender Mercies of God,* Luke 1. 78. *whereby the Day-spring from on high had visited them; to give Light to such that sat in Darkness, and to guide their Feet into the ways of Peace.*

The same was the end of our Saviour's preaching, that all People might come to him, and that by him they might have Life; *For God sent not his Son into the* Joh. 3. 17. *World to condemn it, but that the World through him might be saved.*

And the very same was the end of the holy Apostles and their Successors preaching, that they might save what was once lost, *i. e.* those Sinners who heard them,
because

because God's desire was to bleſs them, *in*
 Acts 3. 26. *turning every Man from his Iniquities.*

Go preach the Goſpel to every Creature ;
 here is our Order, and by virtue of this
 we exhort all Men every where to believe
 and repent ; and to induce them hereunto
 we open a door of Hope, and this Hope
 we found upon Chriſt, who by the Grace
 of God hath *taſted Death for every Man :*
 And therefore we offer a Pardon ſealed
 in Blood, a Heaven of Reconciliation
 here, and a Heaven of Glory hereafter ;
 and ſay to every one that hears us, *Behold,*
now is the accepted time, even the day of
Salvation, repent ye therefore and your Sins
ſhall be blotted out ; receive the Goſpel, and
 your Souls ſhall live for ever.

We beſeech you to be reconciled unto
 God ; for why ſhould your immortal
 Souls, now ſaveable through Chriſt, be
 eternally loſt and undone through your
 own Folly and wilful Impenitence ? *There-*
 Ezek. 18. *fore turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die ?*
 31. *Say not, becauſe 'tis impoſſible for you*
to live ; for had it been God's Will that
you ſhould periſh, he would never have
thrown it upon your's.

Had your Sins been unavoidable, he
 would not have ſaid, *Caſt away all your*
Transgreſſions : Had your Repentance been
 impoſſible, he would not have added,
 Make

Make you a new Heart and a new Spirit.

Did he delight in your Destruction to shew his Power, he would not then have protested, that he *hath no pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, but rather that he should return and live.*

Say not therefore within your selves, that God's secret Will concerning your future State is contrary to his revealed one: for to speak good things and mean ill ones, we justly reckon amongst our Vices; 'tis Blasphemy therefore to ascribe it to the God of Righteousness and Truth.

Had the peremptory Decree of God been the cause of your Ruin, he would have rather told you that die you must, than have solemnly ask'd you the reason, *Wherefore.*

He would not then have bid you strive Luke 13.
24. to enter in at the strait Gate, but rather have told you that 'tis in vain to strive; for 'tis in vain to endeavour where 'tis impossible to accomplish.

In a word, the true Ministers of the Gospel do call on all Men indifferently (in the Name of Christ) to return unto God, and to make themselves capable of his Favour by the Reformation of their Lives.

It therefore follows that the Blessed Jesus suffered and died even for the Eternal
good

good of all Men, for that the Offer made of him in the Gospel is founded upon the Oblation of him on the Cross.

We are to declare to any Man (that will hear and can understand what is said unto him) that Christ hath purchased Remission of Sins, and Life eternal for
 Heb. 2. 3. all, and that no Man shall miss of either, unless he be false to himself, and wilfully neglects his own Salvation.

For unless we say thus much, we say nothing to the purpose, even nothing (at the very best) but a few Uncertainties, and weak Conjectures, a heap of Per-adventures and mere Presumptions.

But now if Christ hath not died for all Men, and made their Salvation possible, these Declarations are but Delusions and Extravagancies, these universal Offers have nothing of Reality and Truth in them, they are but Golden Dreams, mere shadows of Happiness, and words at random.

For were it possible for any of the Unredeemed and Non-elect to believe, yet they could not be saved, for that they are not of the number of the Chosen, for whom only the Son of God vouchsafed to die: And if it be not possible for any of them to believe, then such Preachers do but tantalize their People, who say to all and
 every

every one, *Believe and you shall be saved.*

If Christ died not for all, the Gospel cannot be preached promiscuously with any clearness of Sense and Notion, and with any certainty of Truth.

How can we solemnly say to every Man, *If thou believest, thou shalt be saved*, unless it be supposed that Christ died for every Man to make his Salvation and the Condition of it possible to him?

For in case it should be said to any Man for whom Christ died not, *If thou believest, thou shalt be saved*; such a saying cannot be justified nor avouched for Truth, much less is it of any concernment to him.

For where a Benefit is not at all, it cannot be had upon any Conditions or Terms whatsoever: And certainly there is no Salvation in Christ for any other than for whom he died; therefore to encourage any Man to believe for whom Christ did not die, by saying, that in case he believes he shall be saved; what is this but to feed him with Ashes, or to make him glad with Lies?

Neither is the offer of a Benefit of any concernment to such to whom it is propounded upon impossible Conditions; for it is really a denial of what seems to be promised, and an insufferable upbraiding of
of

of their Impotence and Misery.

To declare that the Non-elect are absolutely shut out from all the saving Benefits of the Cross of Christ, and yet to say to them at the same time, that if they will believe and repent they shall be saved, is just as if we should seriously tell a Man of a certain Inheritance design'd for him in the fanciful World in the Moon, provided he will but make a Ladder and climb up, and take the full and happy Possession of it.

And shall we then say that God promises Happiness to any upon impossible Conditions, and that he will the more severely punish them because of their non-performance? This is inconsistent with the Father of Mercies, who gave his Son to die for all, and who through him giveth unto all Men a sufficiency of Grace to do whatsoever he requires of them.

For should God declare his readiness to pardon our past Sins, and offer a new Happiness to us, and yet all this still to depend upon impossible Terms, judg ye whether this would be a Design worthy of him, and at all agreeable with those serious Desires and Professions which he hath every where expressed, concerning our immortal Life and Blessedness.

And therefore since we are fallen into a
state

state of Sin, Misery and Weakness, if God does now intend to better our Condition, and to recover us to our former Life and Health, it's plainly necessary that he impower and assist us so far as is sufficient to render this gracious Design of his effectual.

But if God has no such merciful Purposes towards the generality of Mankind, or rather to all of them, how can the Predestinarians ever justify their promiscuous offers of the Grace of God to all their Hearers; for what is it to the most but Vanity and Falshood?

But you'll say they are forc'd (at least very often) to preach as tho Christ had died for all.

For if they should say to their (numerous) Auditories, Alas, Sirs, God hath sent his Son to die but for a few, a few at least in the Comparison, &c. and it may be not one in twenty, forty, or an hundred, have any Salvation purchased by him; and there is no certain Evidence, especially for any of you that are not yet converted, that you are or ever can be of that number, for whose saving Benefit Christ suffered.

If these things were expressly taught (which are believed by them, or at least are the natural Consequences of their Faith)

Faith) how would it fill the People with a fearful Despondency and Disquietude, and quench all Desires and Endeavours either to apply themselves to the means of Believing, or to the practice of Godliness and Virtue?

Or doth such a Doctrine as this at all agree with the account which the Angels
 Luke 2. 10. gave of the Gospel, *Fear not; for behold, we bring you good Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People, &c.*

In fine, the Notion of Christ's dying only for the Elect, &c. renders the Ministration of the Gospel either vain or ineffectual.

Vain; forasmuch as the Grace which we declare belongs to all our Hearers, may (for ought we know to the contrary) belong to none, or at least but to a very few of them.

Ineffectual; for if we should plainly tell our People that Christ died but for a small, unknown number; and that it is very uncertain whether any of them that hear us, have or ever can have any saving Interest in him.

Judg ye whether such Preaching would be likely to make many wise and rational Converts.

But now if we preach as we ought, and as Men of our better Principles can fairly do,

do, viz. That Christ by the Grace of God hath tasted Death for every Man, and that he hath placed all Men in a salvable state; here is a clear ground and reason of their Faith and Hope, and a mighty Argument to excite them to all the Duties of Religion.

The sum of the Argument is this.

The Gospel and Terms of Life Eternal may be justly and prudently preached to every Man capable of hearing and understanding: Therefore Christ died not only for the Elect, for a few, or a small part of Mankind, but for all and every Man, &c.

For to preach the Gospel and Terms of Life to all Men, is to assure them all of the possibility of their future Happiness, else all preaching is vain and insignificant to them.

To exhort all Men indifferently to Faith and Repentance, as the way to Life Eternal, if these Terms are supposed to be impossible to the far greater part, is a trifling thing in the Preacher.

To declare to all, that if they believe, repent, and obey, they shall be saved, and yet to suppose the impossibility of these Terms to the most, is but a sporting with the Misery and Impotence of the Non-redeemed.

Lastly; If Christ died but for some
C few,

few, and yet the Gospel may be indifferently preach'd to all; I see no reason from the nature of the thing, wherefore then it may not be preached to the Devils themselves; since this is as true of them, that if they believe, repent, and obey, they shall all be saved, as it is of any of the Reprobates for whose Salvation Christ died not: And the possibility of Duty and Happiness is the same on both sides.

Arg. 4. Men are reprobated, and eternally punished purely for their own Personal Defaults, and for the obstinate contempt and refusal of a Remedy; for abusing the Grace and Mercy of God, neglecting their own Salvation; and for not regarding the things which belong to their Peace whilst the day of Peace and Mercy lasteth.

Eph. 5. 6. — *For this cause cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Disobedience.*

Joh. 3. 19. And this is the Condemnation, that Men reject the Light that is come into the World, and prefer Darkness before it.

Every Man is now made a single Probationer for Heaven; and if he do well he shall be accepted, but if not, Sin lieth at his door.

In the Great Day every Man shall receive according to the things which he hath

hath done in the Body, whether they be good ^{2 Cor. 5. 10.}
or evil: Every one shall then be judged
 and dealt with, answerably to his own Ob-
 servance or Transgression of the Law he
 was under here; he shall not be responsi-
 ble for the Faults of another, or eter-
 nally miserable without any of his own.

But now, in like manner as God threat-
 neth at present, we may very reasonably
 suppose he will punish hereafter: And
 the Procedures of Dooms-day are the best
 Comment on the Eternal Decrees; for as
 God shall then deal with his Creatures,
 even so did he purpose and determine to
 do from all Eternity.

For the Execution of the Divine De-
 crees shall answer to the Formation and
 first making of them, as the Figure in a
 Mirror to the Substance before it: And
 all the Decrees and Purposes of God in
 Eternity, and all the Acts and Revela-
 tions of himself in Time, are so entirely
 one, that the latter are no other than a
 Transcript of the former.

But now this is the constant Language
 of the holy Bible, that *he who believes not* ^{Mark 16.}
shall be damned; and, *except we repent we* ^{16.}
shall perish in our Sins: And that if we
 would enter into Eternal Life, we must
 keep the Commandments.

But can we be justly punished for not

making use of a Remedy that was always out of our reach, and so never meant to heal us?

Therefore to make it just to punish Men hereafter because they do not believe in Christ, nor live according to the Gospel, it seems plainly necessary that the one die for them, and the other assure them of a possibility of being saved.

If the refusal of the means of Grace be the very Reason of Condemnation, and the only Condition upon which Men are determined to future Misery, most manifest then it is, that we all stand in a Capacity of being eternally happy, and that there is a sufficient help vouchsafed to make us so.

The great Design of Christ's Death was not to purchase a few little and temporary Advantages, but rather and chiefly our supreme and endless Good.

It is therefore an unspeakable Instance of the Goodness of God Almighty, that so very great a Benefit is offered to us; and this does plainly suppose the possibility of our observing the Terms upon which it is tender'd, or otherwise where's the Grace and Kindness of it?

The only Dispute therefore is concerning the Universality hereof, if that can be any Question after we are expressly told,

Universal Redemption.

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told, That God sent not his Son into the *World* to condemn, but to save it. And again, That he so loved the *World*, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. Joh. 3. 16.
17.

For by the *World* in this place we cannot fairly and with any Consistency of Reason and good Speech, understand a very few of Mankind, a small number absolutely elected, and who shall be as unavoidably converted and saved: For then the Text would be an intolerably harsh and uncouth Sentence; as for Example, *God so loved his Elect, &c. that whosoever, &c.*

Now I demand (according to this Notion) in what regular Sense and Construction this universal Distributive *Who-soever*, shall or can be understood? Since it is a thing generally known and allowed, that such Particles of Speech do always suppose a difference (at least in possibility) between the things so parted; and that this difference consisteth in that which occasioneth the Distribution.

God so loved the World — that whosoever believeth should not perish, must then necessarily imply, that even some of the *Elect* may possibly (at least) remain Infidels, and be miserable for ever.

C 3

Again,

Again, tho our Saviour expressly mentions only the Happiness of those that shall believe, yet he sufficiently intimates the contrary concerning all Unbelievers: For unless this be supposed, we shall utterly disfigure his Intention, and render the Text altogether contrary both to Religion and Reason. As for Example:

God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever either believeth or not believeth, might not perish, but have everlasting Life.

Certain it is therefore, that our Saviour does here as well suggest the Condemnation of Unbelievers, as he expresses the Happiness of the Faithful; and consequently the World which he speaks of comprehendeth more than the Elect, or otherwise some of them may be Unbelievers, and so shall perish for ever.

Moreover, it is contrary to Wisdom and all seriousness of Discourse to suspend that Benefit, &c. upon the performance of a Condition, which is most justly, most certainly, and with ease to be had without any such performance.

This then being granted, that our Saviour does here suppose both the possibility of some of the World spoken of remaining Unbelievers, and the certainty of their Condemnation who prove to be
such,

such, *i. e.* that they shall perish eternally :

To understand then by the World the Elect only, will unavoidably thus render the Text, *viz.*

God so loved the Elect—that whosoever of the Elect believeth—should not perish, but have everlasting Life; but whosoever of the Elect shall not believe, shall perish eternally : Which is as much as to say, whosoever of the Elect, *i. e.* none of the Elect shall never be saved.

In fine; They who restrain this Text to the Elect only, must (if they will not balk their Principles) suppose Christ to speak after this very odd and unaccountable manner, *viz.*

God so loved the World—that whosoever shall do that which is impossible for him to omit or leave undone, shall not perish, but have everlasting Life.

But did ever any one in his Wits most strictly and seriously require that in the nature of a Condition, and in order to the obtaining of some important Benefit, which is absolutely necessary in it self, and which the Man to whom it is proposed could not possibly avoid?

This is like giving you Mony upon condition that you will not be at York whilst you are at London.

That you will be sure not to do that

which is impossible, and infinitely above your power and reach; and that you will be very careful not to omit or neglect the doing of that which an Almighty Power shall irresistibly compel and drive you to.

To reassume the Argument:

Christ hath brought the means of Recovery to all; they therefore who perish are to impute it to themselves, because when a Remedy is provided they will not be cured.

Article 31.
of the Ch.
of Engl.

The Oblation which Christ once made is a perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Satisfaction for all the Sins of the whole World, as well original as actual.

Ver. 34.

—40.

He is the Saviour of all Men, but some Men will not be saved by him: This is plain by comparing two Verses in the fifth Chapter of St. John's Gospel together; *These things I speak (saith our blessed Saviour) that ye might be saved: But ye will not come unto me, that ye might have Life.*

The former Text doth shew us the final cause of the words foregoing, *i. e.* that he did not only offer but intend their Salvation; and the latter doth shew as plainly, that they as wilfully refused it.

He is merciful to all, but the greatest part of Men are unmerciful to themselves; he is a Saviour of all, but yet all are not saved,

saved, because he only offers, but does not obtrude or force himself upon us, and the most refuse to receive him.

By his Antecedent Will he would have no Man to perish, but that all should repent and live; for this was the prime Design of his coming, even *that we might have Life, and have it abundantly.*

But by his Consequent Will every Man shall perish who is finally impenitent: And therefore, tho our Help be in God, he having set Life and Blessedness before us; yet the Wicked and Ungodly seek Death in the Error of their Ways, and pull down Destruction with the Work of their own hands. wisd. 1.12.

And this is the only Cause or Condition of Reprobation: for that is a Punishment, and a Punishment supposes a Fault, and a Fault implies a Power to have done better: And consequently those who in the Event are wretched and miserable, might have been glorious and happy. And therefore by necessary Consequence again, most undeniably plain it is, that our Blessed Saviour did die to redeem and save not only the Elect, or such who at last shall be actually saved by him, but all and every Man, &c.

The Threats and Promises of the Gospel are truly called the Transcripts and
Copies

Copies of God's Decrees ; such therefore as they are, such must his eternal Purposes be : But his Threats (as well as Promises) are all conditional, and therefore his Decrees must be so too.

God sets a Blessing and a Curse before

Deut. 11. US, *A Blessing if we obey, and a Curse if we*
26, 27. *will not.*

1 Chron. *And if we seek the Lord, he will be found*
28. 9. *of us ; but if we forsake him, he will cast us*
off for ever.

Mat. 6. 14, *If we forgive Men their Trespases, our*
15. *Heavenly Father will also forgive us ; but if*
we do not, nither will he grant us any Par-
don.

Rom. 10. 9. *If thou shalt confess with thy Mouth, and*
believe in thine Heart, &c. thou shalt be
saved : From whence it follows, that if
thou shalt disbelieve and deny him, thou
shalt be damned.

And, to mention no more at present :
Rom. 8. 13. *If ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die ; but*
if through the Spirit ye do mortify the Deeds
of the Body, ye shall live.

Now this is the constant form of God's making Covenant with his Creatures ; and according to the fulfilling or not fulfilling of the Condition, the righteous Judg of all the World proceeds to Sentence.

Mat. 25. *And then shall the King say — Come ye*
blessed.

blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you — For I was hungry, and ye gave me Meat. Well done thou good and faithful Servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many; — enter into the Joy of thy Lord.

— These have not defiled their Garments, and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. Rev. 3. 4.

But on the contrary; He shall say to them on his left-hand, Depart from me ye Workers of Iniquity; when I was an hungry ye gave me no Meat, and when I was thirsty ye gave me not to drink.

Because when I called, ye refused to answer, Prov. 1.
and would have none of my Counsel, but despised my Reproof; I will therefore laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh.

When Desolation and Destruction cometh upon you, then shall you call upon me (crying, Lord, Lord, open unto us) but I will not answer.

Tho now in the extreme Agony and Pain of your miserable Souls, you shall earnestly seek my Pity and my Help, yet you shall not find it; even for that you hated Knowledge, and did not chuse the Fear of the Lord.

It is only for this that Men are finally repro-

reprobated, and made to bear the Wrath of an offended God, even because they are Children of Disobedience, because they have taken pleasure in Unrighteousness, and would not *receive the love of the Truth, that they might be saved.*

If therefore the Execution of God's Decrees at the end of the World, doth bear any Analogy and Correspondence to the making of them at the beginning: And if Men are received into Heaven, and cast into Hell, considered as so and so qualified, *i. e.* if they are at last rewarded and punished according to their good or bad living here; or, as St. John words it, if every Man *shall be judged according to his Works*; and shall (as our blessed Saviour tells us) be rewarded *answerably* thereunto, or *according to their Deeds*:

Most manifest then it is, that we are each of us single Probationers for Happiness; and that Life and Immortality is indifferently offered to us all. And consequently, that the Righteousness, the Sufferings, and Death of Christ have made it possible, either first or last, for every Man to be, or to have been saved.

Arg. 5. Some of those whom Christ died for to save with an everlasting Salvation, may yet possibly be destroy'd, and perish for ever.

Holy

Universal Redemption.

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Holy Brethren, (saith the Apostle) partakers of the Heavenly Calling: Harden not your Hearts, as some of the Israelites did in the Wilderness; for which the Lord swore they should never see the good Land. — 12.

But take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, and you depart from the living God; i. e. from Obedience to him, and so provoke his Displeasure, and thereby exclude your selves from the Heavenly Canaan. — 12.

For we are made partakers of Christ, i. e. of the Happiness which he hath purchased for us, if (or upon the condition that) we hold fast our Confidence; or that we persevere in Christian Faith and Obedience to the end. — 14.

And therefore let us fear and be careful, lest any of us should finally miscarry, and fall short of the Kingdom of Rest and Glory that is promised us. Chap. 4. 1.

You stand by Faith, be not high-minded, but fear. Rom. 11. 20.

And let him that (upon never such good reason) thinks he standeth, take heed lest he fall. 1 Cor. 10. 12.

And keep his Body under a due Subjection, lest he become a Cast-away, or a Reprobate. — 9. 27.

I know 'tis pretended that these Exhortations are Means and Helps tending to

to a necessary End; but surely Perswasives and Admonitions are very improperly given to prevent Impossibilities.

And to suggest that the Means, and the Application of them too, are as necessary as the End to which they are directed, runs us into a Labyrinth and Circle of Confusion, at least equal to the old Stoical Fatality.

Exhortations are moral Mediums, and proposed to Men as to voluntary Agents, and so imply a Power (at least of Refusal) and do plainly suppose, that if we do refuse them, we shall certainly fall into the Evils and Misfortunes of which they warned us.

Rom. 14.

And again, the same Apostle doth in like manner admonish the knowing and confirmed Christian not to be any occasion of Scandal and Offence to the weak ones, in the open and imprudent use of things indifferent: *Destroy not him with thy Meat, for whom Christ died.*

ver. 15.

And elsewhere he discoursing upon much the same Subject, tells us, that unless we temper our Christian Liberty with Charity and with Caution, it is possible that *through our Knowledge a weak Brother may perish, for whom Christ died.*

1 Cor. 8.

11.

Now most evident it is, that the Death of Christ for all Men is in these places
urg'd

urg'd and made use of to excite our Care and Charity towards each other, *i. e.* that we do not, that we should not use any Means that may hurt and destroy such whom Christ came to rescue from Destruction: But that we should do our part to save them, even by an inoffensive and exemplary Life, forasmuch as Christ did his to save them by his Death.

All which most plainly agreeth with that Saying of the same St. Paul to his Son Timothy, viz. *Take heed unto thy self, and unto thy Doctrine — for in so doing thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.* 1 Tim. 4. 16.

This therefore shews the Apostle's Judgment, that tho Christ did really die for all Men, yet some of them may (and probably will) perish, and that especially if any shall be so scandalously wicked, as to contribute thereunto.

For if there were no fear or possibility of their Damnation, the Dehortation would be plainly vain and impertinent; and if Christ did not die to save such who yet may possibly perish, the very Reason and Ground of it would be foreign and false.

The Conclusion therefore is obvious, that there is a possibility for some eternally to perish for whom Christ died; or
if

if you will, that his dying to save them, *i. e.* to purchase a Salvation for them, doth not suppose an absolute Necessity of their non-perishing for ever. For,

1. The Perishing and Destruction which the strong Christian is here warn'd not to expose the weak one to, is not any Temporary Ruin, or pure bodily Hurt; but that which is ordinarily consequent upon Apostacy from the Christian Religion, or other hainous Crimes committed against the Light of Conscience, and which is chiefly future, and belonging to the World to come.

2. This very Admonition necessarily supposes a possibility of the future Ruin of some of those whom the blessed Jesus loved and died for: For otherwise 'twere very ridiculous (even in serious manner) to admonish Men not to do such things, lest thereby they should chance to destroy those who are above all possibility of Destruction.

3. We are here to observe, that the stress of the Argument, whereby the Apostle enforceth the Dehortation, doth most plainly consist in this, *viz.* That those Persons indifferently, whosoever they were, to whom a Scandal or Offence might be offered, were yet most certainly such for whom Christ died.

And

And not that by mere chance and accident, or so far as we know, there may happen to be some few, and here and there one of the Elect and Redeemed, even amongst these many weak and ignorant, these grieved and offended Brethren.

But absolutely, that Christ died for any, or every one of them (which must be grounded upon his dying for all Men :) And from hence he inferreth the Mischief and ill Consequence of giving any Scandal and Offence to any whomsoever of them, and tells us, that it tends to, and endangers the Ruin and Destruction of such for whom our Saviour died, and for whose Salvation he was pleased to suffer.

But now if Christ hath died only for some few, and if they shall all infallibly be saved, and all the rest as unavoidably be damned : There can be no just Argument taken from the Death of Christ for any Man on the one part, and the still remaining Possibility of the Man's future Ruin on the other ; wherefore I should not use my Christian Liberty, tho it be to any Man's Trouble and Offence.

Yea notwithstanding any such Premises, &c. I may very well do it, and that without all fear and danger of any such dreadful Consequence as the Apostle speaks of, *i.e.* the final Ruin and Destruction.

struction of those whom Christ died for : Because then those few whom he came to redeem cannot any of them possibly perish ; and as for the rest, 'tis impossible any of them should be saved.

And so I can do nothing that shall contribute to, or effect the Ruin of any, unless of those whose Misery is already as certain and necessary as ever it can be.

But it is told us, That tho indeed it be impossible that any should finally perish for whom Christ died ; yet still however we are not to lay Scandals in their way, even because the so doing has a tendency towards their Destruction.

But to this it is sufficient to reply, That there can be no tendency towards an Impossibility ; for that which is simply impossible (or, which is much the same, impossible upon a Condition, that is immutable, and which cannot fail) is never the more possible, or the nearer unto being by any thing that we can do, or upon any other account whatsoever : And so there is not any thing that can have so much as a tendency in it to contribute towards, and to produce the future Misery and Condemnation of any for whom our Saviour died.

In the next place they say, That tho it be impossible for any one finally to
perish,

perish, for whose Salvation the Blessed Jesus vouchsafed to suffer; and tho we cannot occasion their eternal Ruin, by the laying of any Scandals in their way, or by any other means whatsoever: yet however we may very greatly hurt and damage them; and the Apostle only argues from the greater, to prevent the lesser Mischief.

But (to wave for the present many things that might be said in Answer hereunto) let this one Remark suffice, *viz.* That the very mention and tender of an impossible Effect, to prevent and hinder any Action whereunto we are strongly tempted and inclined, is manifestly vain and ridiculous; and the more so, if the said Impossibility be presumed to be known unto us before-hand. As for Example:

Suppose I do really (and with all possible Certainty that the case will admit of) know,

1. That I am now a true Believer, and in a state of Grace: And that,

2. Being such, I am under an absolute Impossibility ever to fall away so as to perish; and being under this double Perswasion, am yet very much inclined or addicted to some vicious and sinful Practices: Surely the Consideration of my total and

final falling away, and thereupon my perishing for ever, would be one of the most improper and most impertinent Arguments that could be lightly offer'd to dissuade me therefrom.

4thly. The scope of the Apostle in both the foremention'd places, is to dissuade Christians from an unseasonable and undue use of their Liberty and Knowledg; and this by an Argument drawn not so much from what is unseemly and dangerous in respect of themselves, as from the Consideration of what Danger and Evil may very possibly accrue thereby unto others.

The which is here expressed by destroying, or causing our weak Brother to perish, even him for whom Christ died; *i. e.* the depriving him of that great and blessed Salvation (which the Son of God hath purchased for him) even by the inciting and provoking of him to hainous and wounding Sins.

For otherwise the Apostle's Argument to restrain from such Extravagances, cannot once be supposed to have any influence in order to the End propounded: For no Consideration whatever can at all operate upon the Minds of Men, either to perswade to, or dissuade from any Practice, unless it be more or less believed by them.

If

If then the strong Christian be obliged to believe the weak one to be a Brother, and one for whom Christ died; and also to believe, that such a one may possibly perish through an unchristian Demeanour towards him: Then it follows that he ought to believe, that such a Man may perish, for whom he stands bound to believe that Christ died; and consequently we are to believe that he died not for the Elect only, but rather for all and every Man.

Some Men, for whose Salvation the blessed Jesus did most graciously vouchsafe to suffer and to die, shall yet destroy themselves, and perish for ever. Arg. 6.

Or thus:

Some of those who are bought with the Price of the precious Blood of Christ, and who should therefore have glorified God both with their Bodies and their Souls, which are his, shall on the contrary teach *damnable Heresies*, shall deny the Lord that bought them, and thereby bring upon themselves a swift and endless Destruction. 1 Pet. 1. 18, 19.
1 Cor. 6. 20.
2 Pet. 2. 1.

Most manifest therefore it is, that our Saviour died not only for the Elect, or such alone who shall be eventually saved, but rather for all and every Man whatsoever.

But now against this reasoning (tho close as it looks to be) there are yet these two seemingly grand and very popular Exceptions, *viz.*

1st. That these Persons were not bought to be vertuous and happy, but to be Slaves, and to remain miserable, or rather to be more so for ever. Or,

2^{dly}. That they were not really bought by Christ, but that they were redeem'd only in their own pretence and opinion.

And both these we shall endeavour therefore to remove, by the Remarks and Answers following. And,

1. Were not these Men bought that they might be dear Children of God the Father, and faithful Servants of his Son our Lord, and thereby to enjoy a State of Rest and endless Happiness, but only to be wretched Slaves and Vassals here, and to be for ever miserable in the World to come?

This we must needs say is a very hopeful and obliging Purchase; or rather in reality a very mean and contemptible one, yea a cruel Design, and altogether unworthy of him who is *full of Grace and Truth.*

Joh. I. 14.

But did he lay down his Life that they might be his Slaves, &c. It may then be somewhat worth our while to enquire a little

little whether ever they shall come to the actual Enjoyment of so great a Privilege.

I suppose they do not obtain it by Faith and good Living, for that hereby they would rather become the true Children of Gal. 3. 16. God, and the special Friends of the blessed Joh. 15. 14. Jesus.

Again; Did he buy these People (who finally perish) to be his Slaves and Vassals? Then 'tis certain they either act the part of such, and so serve him in that Capacity which he aim'd at in his Redemption of them, or they act contrary thereunto.

If they act as Slaves and Vassals should, then they plainly answer their Lord's Desire and Purpose, and so deserve not to be blam'd; but much rather to be commended for so doing.

If it be said that they act otherwise than becometh Slaves and Vassals to do, then this must be by acting either Righteously, or Unrighteously.

If it be by acting Righteously that they transgress the Laws of Slavery and Vassalage; then 'twill necessarily follow, that some Persons may prove better, and live more righteously than ever Christ intended or desired they should.

But if it be by acting Unrighteously that they

they pervert the End of their Redemption, then 'tis as plain that Christ did not intend that even these Persons, &c. should live unrighteous and wicked Lives, but the contrary: And if so, his Intentions towards these were the very same, and every way as gracious, as towards those whom he redeemed, that they should

Luke 1. *serve him without a slavish fear, even*
74. *in Holiness and Righteousness, all the days of their Lives.*

Farther; if Christ have bought these Men for Slaves and Drudges, one would think that he hath some base and servile Drudgery to employ them in: but this is contrary both to Reason and Revelation.

For his Commandments are not only true and righteous, but very pleasant and
Mat. II. 30. *full of Peace; His Yoke is easy, and his Burden is light.*

He enjoyns us nothing but what is plainly agreeable to, and that tends to the Perfection of our Natures; and 'tis as much our Interest as our Duty to serve him.

Moreover, if the Persons here said to be bought by Christ, were purchased only to be Slaves, then surely the Apostle must be supposed very greatly to extenuate and lessen their Sin (if it be any) in denying or rejecting of Christ, even by saying
that

that he bought them: For 'tis but natural and plainly reasonable to contentn a Tyrant, and to hate his Tyranny and Oppression.

But the contrary is most obvious, even that his Intention is hereby to aggravate their Crimes, and to shew the very great Ingratitude, of which they were most plainly guilty.

And accordingly the Apostle supposeth, that he who rescueth Men from Bondage and Thralldom, and a miserable Condition, does thereby most certainly deserve, and may very reasonably expect their future Service and Obedience in thankful Acknowledgment of it.

If then they refuse to acknowledg their Benefactor, and shall prove false and disloyal to him, judg ye, Do they not deserve to be divested of all the Benefits purchas'd for them, and to be subjected to a Misery seven times worse than that from which they were so mercifully saved?

But on the other hand, if a Man should redeem such who are now in Slavery, only to put them into a Condition infinitely more wretched and intolerable; judg ye then, Are they at all to be blam'd for slighting this Kindness, and for denying of Obedience upon measures so severe and cruel?

Now

Now then, if Christ shall be said to buy the Men here spoken of to be Slaves, and shall redeem them from a more tolerable Thralldom and Misery, purposely to throw them into one that is unspeakably greater: Is there, or can there be any Mercy herein, or are they hereby at all obliged to any thankful Acknowledgments of it?

I shall not at present digress so far from the Subject before us, as to examine what the State and Condition of lapsed *Adam* and his numerous Progeny should have been (or indeed, whether he should have had any Succession) on a supposition that no Act of Grace or Indemnity had been granted, or, which is much the same, if Christ had not died to redeem us.

For I think all Men of Thought and good Sense do readily allow, That such who are finally impenitent shall suffer a much greater Punishment for their own personal and wilful Sins, than for that which was committed some thousands of years before they (many of them at least) had a Being, and so without their Consent or their Knowledg; unless that can act which is not.

And it is the avowed Doctrine of most, if not of all the *Calvinists*, That at least a very great many of those Non-elect
who

who necessarily perish because Christ never died to save them, nor ever gave them a sufficiency of Grace whereby they might have been effectually regenerated, shall yet be condemned to much the hotter Flames of Hell, and be made to endure infinitely greater Torments, even because they did not believe in Christ, or become obedient to him.

On supposition therefore that this false and most horrid Opinion were true and certain, I might leave it to any Man (still supposing it were also his own case) to determine how far these miserable Creatures are obliged to acknowledg the pretended Grace and Benefit of such a Redemption, or how the Contempt of it is or can be any just Provocation and Displeasure to the Almighty, the All-wise, the most Just and Good God: And should not doubt but that he would say, (supposing he kept his Wits company) because Christ hath no need of any Man's Sin, or Profit from his Misery; he therefore would not die to the end that any one should thereby be an ungodly and a miserable Vassal to him.

2. Some tell us, That tho Christ did not really buy these Men, yet however they had a conceit and opinion that he did do so.

But

But surely this a very odd and unaccountable one; for, not now to enquire how they came to think so, when as there were it seems no reason at all for it, we shall rather demand whether, if these Persons had continued in this Faith, and had always lived according to it (whether I say) they might not have been saved as well as others? or, shall any that rely upon Christ miscarry? or, is not believing in him a sufficient Evidence that he died for us?

Or, did these Men deny Christ whilst they believed he died for them? This methinks looks a little untowardly, and sounds almost like a Contradiction; that they should believe that he bought them, and yet deny it at the same time.

But if it be said that these false Teachers, whilst they believed themselves bought by Christ, did yet deny him in Practice; then it seems that Good Works do not always and necessarily follow Faith.

Or if it be urg'd, that they might formerly profess themselves bought by Christ, tho afterwards they denied it; and that the Apostle does therefore account their latter Opinion to be base and criminal, only because it was contrary to what they once professed to believe.

Then to this we may answer; That if
they

they were formerly mistaken, and did afterwards understand the Truth better, they are then surely not to be blam'd, for now denying that to be true, which they certainly know to be false; unless Men are bound to err for ever, because once they did so; and all the days of their Lives to believe Falshoods, and to please themselves with mere Shadows and empty Appearances.

But if it be further pleaded, that tho they profess'd themselves to be bought, and did believe the same to be true, yet they held such Doctrines which plainly contradicted their Faith.

To this we shall in short reply; That they could hardly wittingly do so (unless they also espoused that very bad Doctrine of Christ's dying only for some few and unknown Persons): for it is not to be easily thought, that Men will teach such Opinions which they apprehend to be contradictory to what they daily profess to believe.

And if they unwittingly taught such Doctrines, *i. e.* if they apprehended nothing of Inconsistency in them to their being redeemed by Christ, and so contrary to their Knowledge and Intention taught some erroneous and bad Opinions:

Alas this (I think) is nothing but what
is

is incident to a great many Eminent and Pious Men (and that especially amongst the Predestinarians) and therefore one would hope not likely to be a Sin of so high a Provocation, as to bring swift Damnation upon them.

But in truth, were we to enquire into the Errors of these *Gnosticks* (or whoever else they were) we might easily find that they had little or no dependance upon the Merits and Righteousness of Christ, or Expectation of being saved thro his Death and Sufferings: So weak and unwarrantable therefore it is to conclude, that their being bought or redeemed was only in Self-conceit and Opinion.

This is plain, that the Apostle designing to aggravate the Sins of these Men, *i. e.* both their damnable Heresies, and their most base and fordid Actions, does therefore declare that Christ had bought them, and that they were upon that account the more rude and ungrateful unto him; even unto him from whom they had received so much Kindness and Advantage, as is manifestly comprehended in his dying for their Redemption.

But the P. Consistory tells us, that this Redemption is to be understood not in Truth, but in Conceit, *i. e.* only that they professed and fancied themselves to be

be bought by Christ, still excluding the reality of the thing.

And so you'll say they might have paraphrased these words, viz.

God hath not appointed us to Wrath, but 1 Thess. 5. 9.
to obtain Salvation by our Lord Jesus.

And again, *God gave his only begotten* 1 Joh. 4. 9.
Son, that we might live thro him: i. e. we
are of an Opinion, and make Profession
that these things are so; but as for the
Truth and Certainty hereof, it's very
modestly acknowledged that we have but
little to say.

In one word; if these Impostors were
not really redeemed by the Death of our
Saviour, they could not possibly have
been saved: And I presume our Christian
Stoicks will not say but that both their
Sin and their Ruin were unavoidable and
necessary; unless they will recede from
their beloved *Mr. Calvin*, who expressly
tells us, "That the Wicked and Ungodly
do by the just Impulse of God that
which is impious and unlawful for them
to do.

Or from *Piscator*, who says, "That all
things are done by the absolute Decree
of God, who hath ordain'd all things
whatsoever that come to pass, and who
does make it necessary for Men to sin,
that he may punish them for it.

Or

Dr. P. Div.
Phil.
p. 134.

Or from Zanchy, who says, "That the
" Reprobates are constrained to sin, and
" so constrained that they cannot but sin :
" Yea that both they and the Elect also
" are pre-ordained by God to sin, as it
" is Sin.

If therefore these most horrid and blasphemous Notions were true, why should we exclaim against those who taught damnable Heresies, who denied the Lord that peremptorily ordained them thereto, and then to endless Destruction for it? For is it reasonable and fitting, think you, to quarrel with the Stones for being hard, with the Fire for being hot, or with the Water because it is moist and fluid; or with any Man for what God wills and makes him to be?

Arg. 7.

Lastly, we shall argue from the Nature and Perfections of God, his Aversion to the Impenitency and Death of the Wicked, and his manifold Wishes and Desires of their Repentance and Happiness, &c.

Now when we speak of God, our Conceptions ought to be generous; and we should look upon him as an eternal Rectitude and Perfection, who never acts but in conformity to his own most just and gracious Nature; and who every where declares

declares his Government of the World to be most wise and merciful; and vindicates the Honour and Glory of his Attributes from all the Aspersions of Cruelty and Injustice, asserting his Rule and Dominion in the World to be righteous, and perfectly agreeable to Infinite Wisdom and Goodness: so that none of his Creatures, unless they are desperately and for ever wicked, can reasonably wish their non-being.

For this is his Name, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious*; and this blessed Character he hath continually verified in his Providence over the World: Mercy and Kindness are inviolable Eminences of his ever adorable Nature; and his Glory shines forth, and becomes most conspicuous in them. Exod. 34: 6.

His Nature is perfect Goodness, 'tis a stranger to Cruelty, and hath no affinity with what's severe and rigorous; his Punitive Justice is extorted from him, and is plainly consequential upon wilful Sin, and most of all so upon final Impenitence: and he is rather angry with Vices than with Persons; he pities the Man whilst he condemns the Malefactor, and Punishment is rather his Refuge than his Choice.

Deut. 5.

29.

This is God's Wish, *O that my People had such a Heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep my Commandments ! &c.* But why (you'll say) doth he desire this if it be impossible, and he hath peremptorily decreed their eternal Ruin ; or, which is much the same, if for the alone sake of *Adam's* Sin he hath absolutely shut them out from all the saving Benefits of the Death of Christ ?

And how are these Desires consistent with his Wisdom, his Justice, his Goodness and Truth ? for it seems he doth really and seriously wish their Reformation, and that not out of any Self-design and Interest (for our Goodness extendeth not unto him, neither can our Sins detract from the sedate and composed Happiness of his unchangeable. and ever-blessed Nature) but to this end, that it might go well with them and their Children for ever ; there is therefore no peremptory Decree to exclude them an Interest in the Death of a merciful Redeemer.

For can he unfeignedly desire that they should now walk in the ways of Life, if his own good Pleasure, even from the outgoings of Eternity, hath absolutely (or at least for a Sin committed long e'er they had a Being) determin'd their Motion in the Paths of Death and endless Ruin ?

Can

Can a tender Mother expose her Babe to be devour'd by wild Beasts, or sawn asunder before her Eyes? *Can she forget* Isa. 49. 15. *her sucking Child,* (one to whom she is a Mother and a Nurse too) *that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb?* Or, suppose there may be some so obdurate and irrelenting, that their Bowels would not yern over such a dismal Spectacle, yet surely there are but few that have degenerated thus deeply into this more than brutish Stupidity and Insensibleness.

And then can we think the compassionate Father of Spirits, who is infinitely more pitiful, will betray his own dear Offspring, and prove so unnatural as to doom them to unspeakable and eternal Torments, even before their Existence shall give them opportunity of offending, or without any Consideration of their Sins?

No, this cannot be, for God is Love, 1 Joh. 4. 16. it self, whose Nature is ever ready to diffuse and communicate it self to every fit and capable Subject; and he glories not so much in that he is powerful to slay, to damn, and torment in unheard-of and perpetual Flames, as that he speaks in Righteousness, and is willing and *mighty to save.*

And that he might fully convince the World of this gracious Property of his, he hath pronounced *Judgment* to be his strange Work, and an Act that is foreign to his milder Nature, and which Mens Impenitence forces him to.

And lest the Sonꝝ of Darkniess should entertain any such base Thoughts of the God of Light, as if he pleased himself in our Ruin, he hath joined an Oath to it, and swore, that he neither wishes nor wills, neither desires nor delights in, *nor hath any pleasure in the Death of the Wicked*, (*i.e.* in his everlasting Destruction) but rather that he turn from his ways and live.

Ezek. 33. 11.

God would have all his Creatures to know that he is no ways accessary to their Sin and Ruin: O Israel, *thou hast destroy'd thy self, but in me is thy Help*, says the Lord.

Hosea 13. 9.

And when he sees what untoward Creatures we are, forsaking what he loves, and running after that which he hateth, making such unhappy Choices for our selves, as if we studied our own Destruction; then he begins to reason with us, O my People, *What have I done unto you? What Evil have ye found in me? Or have I been a barren Wilderness unto you, or a Land of Darknes?*

Mich. 6. 3.
Jer. 2. 5.

And

And if after all this, Men shall yet impute their Misery to so benign a Father, he then stands ready to acquit himself, and calls Heaven and Earth to record against them; and declares that for his ^{Deut. 12.} part, he hath (yea since *Adam's* Fall too) ^{19.} set Life and Death before them, and hath presented Blessing and Cursing to their Option, and advis'd them to chuse what will make them for ever happy.

And then if they miscarry at last, he shews that it is their own fault, and upbraids their wilful Folly; *Ye will not come* ^{Joh. 5.40.} *unto me, that ye might have Life.* Yea, that he may effectually take away all manner of Excuse from them, and manage his Cause in a way of Reason and Equity, he hath not only shewn his Righteousness to the Heathen, and declared his Salvation to the ends of the Earth, but also hath asserted it possible for us to perform his Will, *That his Yoke is easy, and his* ^{Mat. 11.30.} *Burden light; That his Commandments are not grievous:* And in a word, that his Service is every way reasonable, and most ^{Rom. 12.1.} agreeable to the better Dictates and Sentiments of our Minds.

For the Righteousness which is of Faith speaketh on this wise, The Word is very nigh thee, even in thy Mouth and in thy Heart, that thou mayst do it: i. e. The

Luk. 11. 13.

Terms of Justification (since the Fall) are gentle and easy, within every Man's Power by the Grace of God, and no Man can justly complain of any hard Usage, or that God commands things that are impossible and above his reach: For the Holy Spirit, that mighty Principle of Life and Vigor, is always ready to assist the hearty Endeavours of all sincere Persons to observe the Commandments and Will of God; and this Help we may assure our selves to receive whensoever we do but humbly implore it.

Jer. 2. 13.

Now if Men shall yet neglect their Interest, and precipitate their Souls into Misery, then the Lord bewails their Folly and Misfortune; *My People have forsaken me the Fountain of living Waters, and have hewn out to themselves broken Cisterns, that can hold no Water:* Which seems as if he should thus bespeak them, O my People, if you could indeed have advantaged your selves by leaving of me, then I could be content, and Reason would require that I should bear with you; but that you should cleave to mere Vanities and Shadows, which can no ways benefit and help you, this is your Folly, and will be your Misery, and this I cannot think of without Pity and Compassion to you.

*

The

The Lord waits to be gracious (after many Affronts and Provocations) and with abundant Patience and Long-suffering expects our Return and Amendment; and when we prove incorrigible, and will not be reformed, and Punishment becomes necessary (if not for our own, yet for the good of others) he then sets about it with a kind of Reluctancy and Averse-ness, *He doth not willingly afflict or grieve the Children of Men.* How (saith he) shall I give thee up, O Ephraim! How shall I make thee as Admah, and set thee as Zeboim! my Heart is turned within me, and my Repentings are kindled together. Lam. 3. 33.

These Expostulations shew that he hath no Malice against his Creatures, but is willing that his Kindness should allure them to the Consideration of their Happiness: And therefore he appeals to our own Reason, and is content to submit himself and his Dispensations to our Judgment, *i. e.* whether we can think of any better way than what he hath taken to reform us; *Judg,* saith he, *between me and my Vineyard, what more could I have done for it?* or what else can my People justly desire at my hands?

God hath sent his only begotten Son to save us, and he hath declared himself

the Saviour not of a few, but of all Men, and signified that the design of his coming was to diffuse a healing Influence upon all the broken and distracted Sons of *Adam*, and that he hath brought good Tydings of great Joy even unto all People: And therefore when his Kindness is rejected, and Men involve themselves again in Ruin, he is moved with Compassion to them, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! *Mat. 23. 37. thou that killedst the Prophets, and abusedst all the Heavenly Messengers, How often would I have gathered thy Children together? i. e. I would have saved thee, but thou wouldst not be saved by me.*

Can we think that the Holy *Jesus* wept Tears of Deceit and Treachery? yet so it must be, first to pass an absolute Decree of Reprobation against them, and then to profess his Readiness to have saved them, and to insinuate, that because they frustrated his gracious Purpose, he therefore bewails their Infidelity and Ruin.

If this were so, the Tenour of our Saviour's Deploation is, O *Jerusalem*, &c. I and my Father have made a peremptory and eternal Decree that you should never be happy, and therefore I am now come to testify my Love to you, and to lament and weep over your Destruction; or rather to tell you, that the Decree

cree of Heaven hath wrought your Mi-
fery, and for my part I never design'd
your Happiness.

But this cannot be, for it is repugnant
to the Justice and Truth of God to de-
termine Men to Sin, and to endless
Sorrows, and then to expostulate where-
fore they chuse Sin which is the Way,
and Death it self which is the sad Con-
clusion.

Are they irreconcilable who are called
to hear the Word of Reconciliation? Or
would God intreat us to be reconciled to
him, and yet resolve that he will never
be in Friendship with us? Or can he en-
join us to repent that we may have Par-
don, and to believe that we may be
saved, and yet absolutely exclude us from
all the saving Benefits of the Cross of
Christ? Or could he ever wish for that
which was directly against his Will?

*O that my People had hearkened unto me, Psal. 81. 13.
and that Israel had walked in my Ways!*

Is it not Blasphemy to imagine, that he
whose Mercy is so much higher than his
Justice as the Heavens are above the
Clouds, should first leave us without Psal. 36. 5.
Strength, and then upbraid us with our
Weakness; that he should first deny us
Legs, and then command us to walk
before him; or give us Eyes without
sight,

fight, and afterwards punish us for being blind?

Mat. 11. 20.

Now manifest it is that our Saviour upbraids some because they repented not, which he could not justly have done, had it been impossible for them to have repented; and he was of too pitiful and gracious a Disposition to jeer a poor Creature for being such as God made him, or for what he could not but necessarily be.

Psal. 58. 4.

Joh. 3. 19.

We esteem it ill Nature to upbraid a Stammerer for not speaking plain; nor is any Man reproach'd for being naturally, but wilfully blind, not for being born deaf, but for being like the Adder that stoppeth her Ears.

He that binds my Feet and then invites me to come to him, intends me nothing for Entertainment, but a Sarcastm or bitter Jest: For if he were serious he would set my Feet at liberty, that I might come in good earnest, and not say to me as we sometimes do to a Child that's fallen down, Come hither to me and I will help thee up.

Now for God to deny us Grace sufficient for our Duty, and yet to condemn us for the non-performance of it; to offer Heaven upon impossible Conditions, and yet to account it as Kindness; to

to declare that *he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to the knowledge of the Truth and be saved,* and yet absolutely to reprobate the most, and to pass them by without any consideration of their own Defaults: To say that their Destruction is of themselves, and that in him is their Help, and yet never to afford them those Assurances which are necessary to escape it; to swear that he *hath no Pleasure or Delight in the Death of the Wicked, but rather they should repent and live,* and yet never to put them into a Capacity of Repentance, or Possibility of Happiness and Life Eternal. If this be not a mere mocking of the Creature, and plainly contrary to the Justice and Verity of the Creator, then surely nothing is.

It's true, God is our Sovereign and our Judg; but then 'tis as true that he is our Father: As a Sovereign, he is inclined to reform us; as a Father to forgive, and as a Judg to punish, if we will not be reformed. As a Father he delighteth to punish us less than we deserve, and as a Judg he hateth to punish us above it: as a Father, he may and often doth forgive Transgressions; but because he is a Judg, he cannot possibly condemn without them: Or if he did repro-

reprobate as a Sovereign only to shew his Power, and that the Object of his Decree were not the Sinner, but the Man, it would then be a Misery, but not a Punishment to be damned.

Or if the Man be reprobated purely for the Sin of *Adam*, how can Justice eternally punish him for not believing in Jesus Christ? And if there be no new Capacity of Happiness granted to him, can it be fair and just to inhance his Misery beyond all Expression, upon a bare pretence that the Man hath rejected a great Salvation, and slighted fresh Offers of Grace and Life?

Isa. 5. 3.

Jer. 2. 5.

This then is our Comfort, that in the business of our future State, God doth not alledg the Absoluteness of his Power, so much as the Righteousness of his Sentence: And is ready to manifest the Justice and Equity of all his Actions, and to give a fair Account of his Procedures with us, even according to our own known Principles and ways of Reasoning: And in the midst of that Severity which is futable to a Judg, he still remembers that Mercy that is agreeable to a Father.

And if God would not reprobate those original and wilful Transgressors (*Adam* and *Eve*) no not to satisfy his Justice,

Justice, how much less their Posterity, for no other end than to shew his Power?

When the Friend of God became an Advocate for *Sodom*, he pleaded with the Almighty, not as he is an Absolute Sovereign, but as an Equitable Judg; *Wilt thou also destroy the Righteous with the Wicked? That be far for thee to do after this manner; for shall not the Judg of all the Earth do right?* Gen. 18. 23.

Now then if God be our Judg and our Father, as well as our Sovereign, tho he can pardon our Transgressions, yet he cannot condemn us without them: And if he cannot cast us into Hell without regard to our Sins (as he cannot because he is merciful, just, and true) he could as little decree so to do unto us.

And now would not God spare Man, who to the end he might save him, did not spare his only begotten Son? Or can any one Branch from *Adam* necessarily perish, whilst a gracious God professes a desire of the contrary? Or could he whose Merits are acknowledg'd to be sufficient for the whole World, and who every where professeth himself to be a universal Lover of Mankind, deny a part of that All-sufficiency to any one whom he had made after the Likeness of

of himself, and who could not help his being born of sinful Parents, who is promised that he shall not perish for their Iniquity, and who is also qualified with Misery to be a fit Object of God's Compassion? No surely, for the great Lover of Souls is so liberal and diffusive of his Goodness, that he never withholds it where it is but wanted and desired, but only withdraws it where it is abused.

Ezek. 18.
20. 'Tis true, he gave up *Israel* to their own Hearts Lusts, and left them to walk in their Counsels; but this Reason for it is render'd in the foregoing words, *Because Israel would have none of him, and they would not hearken unto his Voice.* So he

Psal. 81. 11.
Rom. 1. 21. gave up the *Gentiles* to vile Affections and Uncleaness, but it is with a *Wherefore*, and a *Because*, and *For this reason*, viz. for that they would not acknowledg him whom they could not but know, *and changed the Truth of God into a Lie.*

Would God have set at once before us a Heaven to draw, and a Hell to drive us, if he had absolutely decreed us unto a *Go ye Cursed*? Would he have used his Lance to search, or his Balm to supple, if he had meant that the Wound should be incurable, and the Patient desperate?

This

This therefore being a gross and a palpable Contradiction, the plain Consequence is, that all Men are put into a salvable State through Jesus Christ: Yet there are such who reject the Counsel of God against themselves; and we know a Rejection on the one side implies an Overture on the other. There are those who always resist the Holy Ghost, *i. e.* Luk. 7.30. Acts 7.51. that strive against his Strivings; for every Resistance implies a Strife, and every Striving implies a willingness to conquer.

And so Christ professed his Intentions and earnest Endeavours to have gathered *Israel*, but they refused it; and therefore their House was left unto them desolate.

The Servant that was cast into outer Darknes had a Talent of Grace bestowed upon him, which was taken away, because instead of improving it he had hid it in the Earth; which shew'd him to be a wicked and a slothful Servant. Mat. 25.15, 30.

So the Guests that were excluded the Marriage-Feast, were not peremptorily shut out to shew the Pleasure of the King, but because being invited they contemn'd his Kindness, and would not come. Mat. 22.3.

The CONCLUSION.

I. The Doctrine of Universal Redemption being every where in Scripture asserted with the greatest Clearness and Evidence, and being also most agreeable to the Divine Nature and Government of the World, and of the greatest Concernment to Mankind, as that upon which the Belief and Expectation of any Man's Happiness must first be founded (*i. e.* if his Faith and Hope thereof have any solid Reason and Foundation)

It is surely much the greater wonder, that so many Men should even to this day so zealously contradict and oppose it, especially if we consider that no Man's Interest doth consist in its being false; but thousands and thousands are exposed to unavoidable and, endless Misery if it be not true.

But so have I seen that ill Education, Prejudice, the Allures of Friendship, and little Interest of Parties, cause many to reject and disbelieve such most plain
and

and rational, such most wholesom and comfortable Principles.

2. For what surer ground can there be of Faith and Hope in God, than what ariseth from the Consideration of God's giving his Son for us all, *That* Rom. 8. 32. *whoſoever believeth in him might not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life?*

Now none of our paſt and repented of Sins ſhould at all diſcourage us from entertaining comfortable hopes of Mercy and Forgiveness: For our once ſad and deſperate Condition is much better'd and amended, Heaven is placed within our reach, and the Kingdom of God is brought unto us; and there remains nothing to be done but our own free and reaſonable Contributions towards the actual Poſſeſſion of it.

Chriſt hath laid the Foundation of our Happineſs, and made Salvation poſſible to us, and doth now expect that we Phil. 2. 12. by Faith and Repentance, with thankful Hearts and Religious Lives, 2 Pet. 1. 10. ſhould ensure to our ſelves the manifold Bleſſings which are purchaſed for us.

Let us all learn therefore to admire and greatly to eſteem the wonderful Grace and Goodneſs of our Redemption, moſt gladly and with all poſſible readi-

ness to accept the merciful Offers thereof, and faithfully endeavour to observe the Conditions required of us, in order to the Completion and consummating of our Happiness.

Let us give Glory and Praise to Almighty God for the Love and Good-will vouchsafed to all People, and adore and magnify his universal Grace and Goodness; and may the good Spirit so effectually inspire our Hearts, that we may constantly express a becoming and grateful acknowledgment hereof.

Let us love, honour, and serve the Blessed Jesus, that great Friend and Lover of our Souls; and so improve the Capacity of Pardon and Life eternal, into the Act and Being of them.

In one word, let us daily invoke the Help and Guidance of the Holy Ghost, that we may break off our Sins by a sincere and hearty Repentance; always fear God, and keep his Commandments, and live in Charity and Peace with all Christian People: That so when our dear Redeemer shall come to judg the World, it may be our Happiness to be received with a *Well done good and faithful Servants, enter into the Joys of your Lord.*

Which

Universal Redemption.

83

Which God of his Mercy grant us
thro Jesus Christ our Saviour, *Who hath* Rev. 1. 5.
loved us, who hath dy'd for us, and wash'd
us in his own Blood: And to whom
therefore with the Father, and the Holy
Ghost, be all Honour, all Glory, Thank-
giving and Praise, World without end,
Amen.

F I N I S.

Which God of his Mercy grant us
 thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Saviour, that we may be
 loved us, who hath dy'd for us, and waſh'd
 us in his own Blood: And to whom
 therefore with the Father, and the Holy
 Ghoſt, be all Honour, all Glory, Thanks-
 giving and Praise, World without end,
 Amen.

FINIS

